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CONGRESSMAN BOYD FIGHTS FOR VETERANS

WASHINGTON, DC: Tonight, Congressman Allen Boyd (D-North Florida), a member of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee, voted to keep funding for veterans health care in the VA-HUD Appropriations bill for FY2004. This funding was promised to veterans earlier this year. Unfortunately, despite Congressman Boyd's efforts, the Committee broke this promise.

In order to secure passage of the FY2004 budget resolution earlier this year, House Republicans promised a \$1.8 billion increase over the Administration's funding request for the VA health care system. However, the VA-HUD Appropriations bill, approved by the House Appropriations Committee tonight, does not include this \$1.8 billion increase that was promised to veterans.

In response to the lack of adequate funding, the Veterans of Foreign Wars have said this; "For the Congress not to appropriate this amount is a clear betrayal of the assurances made to America's veterans by the House Republican leadership."

"This is outrageous," said Congressman Allen Boyd. "What type of message does it send to our men and women in uniform who are all over the world fighting terrorism and protecting our homeland that we can't keep the basic promise of health care to our veterans? Health care benefits that they earned and deserve. Robbing veterans of this funding is wrong. I will do all I can to continue fighting for our veterans, and ensure that they receive the full benefits they were promised."